

Poultry Showmanship

As in most showmanship classes, judging will be on your knowledge and the way you present and prepare your bird for judging

Exhibitor

- Appearance
- Poise
- Speaking ability-confidence, attitude, clarity
- Knowledge about your bird
- General poultry knowledge

Bird

- Quality of your bird-comparison to the 'standard' (if your bird has shortcomings, but it is the best bird you own, go ahead and show the bird. You can show that you are knowledgeable about the standard by pointing out the faults in your bird and discussing what needs improvement. Market birds such as broilers and roasters are judged on size, condition, conformation and pen uniformity.
- Condition of your bird-feather condition, health, physical condition
- Show preparation of your bird

Handling your bird

- Holding and Carrying the bird
- Putting bird in cage
- Taking bird out of the cage
- Examining your bird
- Posing the bird

Individuals should be dressed neatly with dark pants or jeans and a clean, ironed, long-sleeved white shirt or show jacket. A clean white t-shirt is also acceptable for county fairs. Be polite, look at the judge and don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand something or are not sure what he would like you to do. Showmanship judges enjoy seeing interest and enthusiasm in the youth and will help you do your best.

Each exhibitor presents themselves and their bird to a judge on an individual basis. Times will be posted when the showmanship judge will be available. Make sure you approach him for judging within that time frame; usually the line is not too long. Members are judged on their ability to show the bird to its best advantage and should be prepared to answer questions.

Careful preparation is necessary. Calmness of the bird is important, so start working with the bird you will use for showmanship several weeks before fair time. The bird you use for showmanship may be a bird used for other poultry classes, or a bird specifically selected for the showmanship

may be a bird used for other poultry classes, or a bird specifically selected for the showmanship class. Be sure your bird has no parasites like mites or lice, is a good representative of its breed, is clean and can be easily handled by you—consider size of exhibitor and the bird.

Individuals should be prepared to answer various questions about the parts of your bird, production, health, nutrition, selection, breeding, purpose and the history of your bird as well as general poultry questions. Sometimes a judge will simply ask you to tell him about your bird. The judge will not ask you many questions, but be prepared to answer his questions the best that you can—be confident (even if you don't feel confident). Be sure to know the breed, sex and age of your bird as well as where you purchased it. Most of the time a judge asks different questions to each exhibitor. He will often inquire how long you have shown poultry, and follow up by asking a senior exhibitor more advanced questions than he would an intermediate or junior.

You should handle your bird correctly in a natural, comfortable, safe way, while at the same time allowing the judge to see what they are looking for. Your 4-H poultry literature will show you the correct way to handle your bird and the way to properly examine a bird.

Removing Your Bird from a Cage...

Often feathers are pulled out, broken, or ruffled when birds are removed from cages. It is impossible for a bird receiving rough treatment to show to its best advantage. Avoid damaged feathers and control your bird more easily by removing the birds properly. Be sure to practice this with your birds prior to show time.

- * Reach into cage and turn the bird so its head faces the door
- * Place your right hand on the bird's back and grasp its left wing with your fingers
- * Slide or lift the bird toward the door -- head first
- * Place your left hand (palm upward) under the breast and clasp its legs between your index, middle and ring fingers, hold the bird's wing down with your thumb. Keeping your right hand on top, lift the bird out of the cage. If the bird is large you may cradle it in your arm, keeping your left hand around the legs with your fingers on the breast and wing. Placing the bird's head under your arm will also help calm a 'flighty' bird.
- * Always remember to close the cage door after you have removed your bird

When returning the bird back into the cage, keep one hand on top, one hand on the bottom, and lift the bird in head first.

Sample Showmanship Questions...

NOTE: showmanship questions are not limited to these, they are only samples of the types of questions you may be asked!

- *In order for a female to lay eggs, does she need the presence of a male?
no
- *What is the function of the vent? Is it common to all types of poultry?
all poultry have one, it's function is the opening where the egg, uric acid and feces exit
- What are the following: pullet, hen, cockerel, rooster, duck, drake, goose, gander, tom?
p-young fe chicken, h-mature fe chicken, c-young m chicken, r-mature m chicken, dk-female duck, drk-male duck, gs-f goose, gdr-m goose, tom-m turkey
- *What is the importance of calcium in the diet of laying hens?
needed for the calcium in the egg shell
- *What precautions must be taken when you introduce new birds to your flock?
check for disease, quarantine for about 3 weeks, re-check for symptoms
- *What are the different characteristics between adult male and female chickens, (ducks, geese, turkeys)?
chickens-m.long sharp hackle feathers, saddle feathers and sickles on tail, f.short, blunt hackle feathers, no saddle feathers or sickles on the tail
- *How many eggs could a hen potentially lay in one year?
365 - one a day
- *Why does a judge ask to see the feet and legs of birds?
check for deformity, disease and parasites
- *What is the function of the preen gland and where is it located?
it is located near the base of the tail, it's function is to produce an oily substance that the bird uses to wipe on it's feathers for preening, helps to waterproof waterfowls feathers
- *What is the purpose of the breed of poultry you are using for showmanship?
meat production, egg production, dual purpose, ornamental/exhibition
- *What color eggs does your breed of bird lay?
white earlobe-white, red earlobe-brown exceptions and others, green, pink, etc.
- *How many primary and secondary flight feathers do most chickens have?
10 primary and 14-18 secondary
- *What are three functions of the comb and wattles?
help regulate body temperature, sex differentiation, breed identification
- *What are basic signs of good health in your poultry?
alert, active, clear eyes, good manure consistency and free from external parasites
- *What is the difference between a broiler, a roaster and a capon?
broiler-young meat birds processed at(6-8) wks of age, roasters-(10-14) wks of age, capon-castrated meat bird (18-20) wks of age
- *Where is the crop on a chicken and what is it's purpose?
an enlargement of the esophagus just above the junction of the body cavity. It holds food that the bird eats and slowly releases it into the digestive track.
- *How can you tell if baby chicks under a brooder or heat lamp have the proper temperature?
they are spread out evenly and not bunching up in one spot, they are active and fairly quiet
- How can you tell a male turkey from a female turkey?
by beard and size of bird

*How many eyelids does a chicken have? 3 - one from the top, one from the bottom and one clear one that goes from the center outward

What are some major external parasites of poultry, how do you check for them and treat them?
Lice and mites, check for them under the wing, near preen gland, neck

How is Salmonella pullorum spread or transmitted?
through the egg either from the organisms in the ovary or by contact of infected manure in the next box

What disease of poultry should small flock owners be particularly aware of that can cause high mortality, especially to commercial poultry growers?
Avian Influenza

If you saw a lot of manure staining on the feathers just below the vent, what health related problem would you suspect? Why is it a problem and how can it be treated?
diarrhea, the bird will get dehydrated, provide electrolytes, water and determine why the bird has it - high load of worms, coccidiosis or bacterial infection of the gut

Name three nutrients that chickens and other poultry require each day.
water, oxygen, protein, carbohydrate, fat, minerals and vitamins

Which nutrient other than oxygen should poultry have access to at all times?
water

What are the signs of 'molt' relative to poultry and why is it important?
loss of feathers, stop of egg laying, it renews bird for another reproduction cycle

What three things need to be supplied when using an incubator to hatch eggs?
heat, humidity, turning of the eggs

How long are the incubation periods for chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese?
c-21 days, t-28 days, d-28 days, g-30-32 days, muscovy ducks 33-35 days

Often in breeding flocks there is a loss of feathers noticed on the lower back and back of the head of some females. What is usually the cause of this?
the male has been mating with the females

Many starter feeds for chickens are labeled as 'medicated'. What is the medication and why is it in the feed? *Amprolium or Coban - helps bird build immunity to Coccidiosis, a disease of the digestive tract*

If when checking the legs of your chicken you find that the scales on the shank are crusty, bumpy and swollen, what might the problem be? How can it be treated?
scaly leg mites - dust with malathion or dip legs in gasoline and/or coat with vaseline

To keep your flock laying eggs year round, what key factor needs to be controlled or altered to meet the needs of the bird?
light - minimum of 16 hours of light per day, year 'round

What gaseous product can be produced in manure that can be harmful to poultry?
ammonia

*Where is the axial feather found and how many does a chicken have?
on wing between primary and secondary flight feathers, one axial on each wing

*What is the main difference in starter, grower and layer food for chicks, pullets and laying hens?
the protein levels...starter 18-19% CP, grower 14-15% CP, layer 16-17% CP

* indicates questions are suitable for novice or intermediate levels

Poultry Showmanship

Name/Number _____ Grade/Division _____ Date _____
Name of Show _____ Judge _____

Appearance of the Animal	(20)	_____
Appearance and Attitude of Exhibitor	(25)	_____
Handling and Control of the Animal	(25)	_____
Knowledge and Examination of Bird	(30)	_____
Total Points	(100)	_____

Notes: _____

Sample forms — see other side
* judge may use something
different though!
also



University of
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4-H POULTRY SHOWMANSHIP RULES

Cooperative Extension System

Poultry shows in the past consisted of birds being displayed in cages and the birds being judged on their conformational merits. As one can imagine, this left little opportunity for interaction with the owners or the public. Today, more shows are incorporating a showmanship section to their shows. Each individual presents their bird to the judge in a way that demonstrates the bird's best production qualities. The judge can ask questions of each exhibitor and the owners can learn from the experience of the judge. 4-H has incorporated this into their protocol for poultry showmanship. Unlike a standard poultry show, the 4-H exhibitor is not judged on the merits of the bird in this section of the show, but is judged on his/her ability to show the bird to its best advantage.

Careful preparation prior to the show is necessary to be an effective show person. The calmness of the bird is a reflection of how much the bird has been handled and worked with prior to the show. As a show-person it is imperative that you start working with your bird several weeks prior to the show by handling them and practicing the different holds. To acclimate your bird to the washing routine, wash your bird several times

during the weeks before the show. However, DO NOT wash your bird the day before the show, because birds need a full 48 hours to re-oil their feathers and look their best.

Check your birds for external parasites, such as lice or mites, and treat immediately if found. NO BIRDS will be allowed at poultry shows with signs of parasites.

Showman should be prepared to answer various questions relative to production, health, nutrition, breeding, etc. about their birds and poultry in general. Showman should dress neatly in clean black or white pants and a white shirt with some sort of appropriate tie. A piece of black ribbon is fine for girls. The most important thing is that on the day of the show you handle your bird in a natural and comfortable way for both you and the bird, and at the same time allowing the judge to see what they are looking for. It is best to choose a bird proportional to your size. For example, bantam birds are better suited for younger, smaller youth. To help you show your bird to its best advantage we have developed the following procedures as the basis for correct handling.

HANDLING THE BIRD FOR SHOWMANSHIP

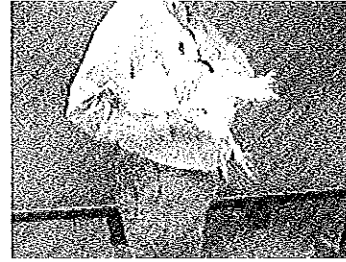
Removing the bird from the cage:

To remove the bird from the cage, reach in and pin the bird down and turn it so its head is facing the door. Place one hand beneath the body with the index finger between the legs and the remaining fingers grasping one leg and the thumb the other. Place your other hand on the back and remove the bird head first. Remember to always close the cage door after removing the bird.

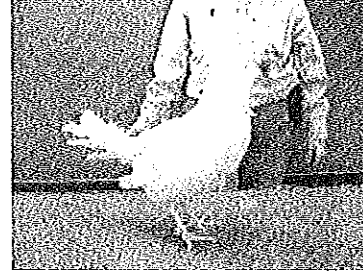


Carrying the bird:

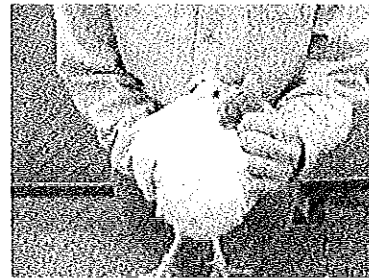
Still holding the bird as described above, and shown to the right, place the bird's head into the crook of your arm or with the head under your arm. You may place your hand on the back of the bird to control it, as required.

**Posing the bird:**

Pose the bird standing upright on the table. It is up to the judge which way to face the bird. Once the bird is posed and set, step back from the table with your hands behind your back while the judge inspects the bird.

**Showing the head:**

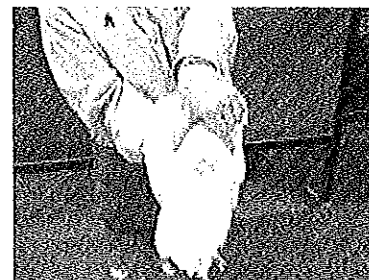
With the bird posed on the table facing the judge, place one hand under the neck of the bird, gently stroking the beak with your thumbnail until you achieve the desired position. To show the left side of the head use your right hand and vice-versa.

**Showing the wings:**

Pose the bird facing the judge placing one hand on the back. With your other hand reach under the head and neck and grasp the front (wing bow) of the wing and spread the wing to show all the feathers clearly.

**Width of the body:**

Present the bird, with outstretched arms, to the judge tail first and span the widest portion of the back over the hip bones with your fingers. Lift your hand off the back, keeping fingers at the width of the bird to show the judge.

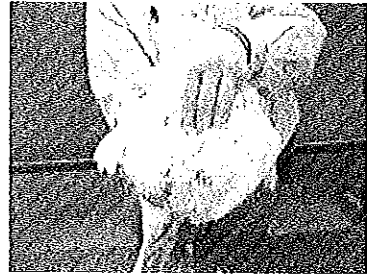


Flexibility of the pubic bones:

Present the bird, with outstretched arms, to the judge tail first, tipping the head downward. Show the flexibility by gently squeezing the pubic bones together with the thumb and index finger.

**Width of the pubic bones:**

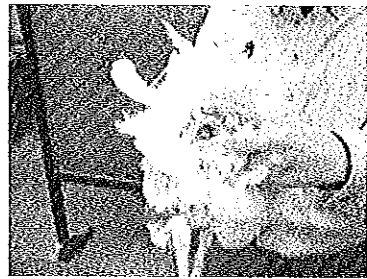
Present the bird, with outstretched arms, to the judge tail first, tipping the head downward. Show the width by placing the hand over the top of the vent and placing as many fingers as will fit between the pubic bones, then telling the judge the number of fingers.

**Depth of the body:**

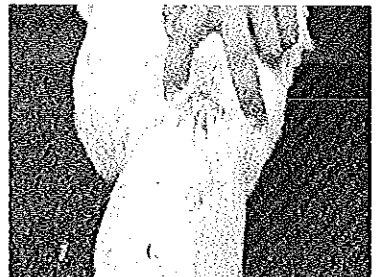
Present the bird, with outstretched arms, to the judge tail first, tipping the head downward. Show the depth by placing the hand over the abdomen and placing as many fingers as will fit between the pubic bones and the tip of the keel, then telling the judge the number of fingers.

**Showing the vent:**

Present the bird, with outstretched arms, to the judge, tail first with the head down. Place your hand over the vent and using the index and second fingers spread the feathers to clearly display the vent.

**Showing the preen gland:**

You may be asked to show the uropygial (preen) gland. Present the bird, with outstretched arms, to the judge, tail first using the index and second fingers to spread the feathers from the base of the tail, exposing the preen gland.



Showing the under-color of the feathers:

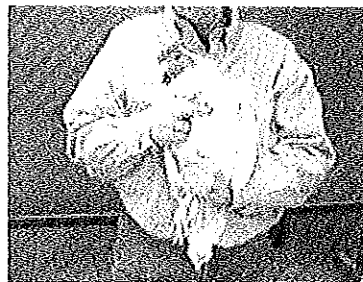
Under-color of the feathers can be shown in two positions.

Under-color of the back:

Present the bird, with outstretched arms, to the judge tail first with the tail facing down. Stroke the feathers on the back toward the head displaying the under-color.

**Under-color of the breast:**

By grasping the bird's legs in one hand, hold the bird's back to your chest, head up. With the other hand, sweep the feathers of the breast upwards, revealing the under-color of the feathers.

**Showing the breastbone:**

Using the same hold as described for the under-color of the breast, use your index finger and second finger to spread the feathers and expose the breastbone.

**Showing feet and legs:**

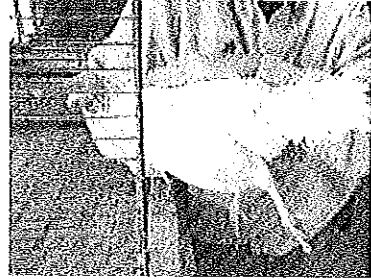
Show feet and legs by placing the bird's back against your chest, as described for showing the breast, with head up, holding one leg in one hand. With your other hand show the top of the feet and legs and then the bottom. Lastly flex the toes. Switch hands to show the other leg.

**Walking the bird:**

You may be asked to walk the bird around the table to show leg movement and indications of lameness. You must practice this maneuver until your bird easily walks with a minimum of coaxing.

Placing the bird into the cage:

Return your bird to its cage by carrying it as previously described and placing the bird into the cage head-first, closing the door afterward. Return to the table to await further instructions or dismissal by the judge.



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Showmanship Age Groups

- 3rd - 5th grades junior
- 6th - 8th grades intermediate
- 9th grade and up senior

Sample Showmanship Questions...

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What is the function of the vent? Is it common to all types of poultry?

all poultry have one, function is the opening where the egg, uric acid and feces exit

*What are the following: pullet, hen, cockerel, rooster, duck, drake, goose, gander, tom?

p-young fe chicken, h-mature fe chicken, c-young m chicken, r-mature m chicken, dk-female duck, drk-male duck, gs-f goose, gdr-m goose, tom-m turkey

*What precautions must be taken when you introduce new birds to your flock?

check for disease, quarentine for about 3 weeks, re-check for symptoms

*What are the different characteristics between adult male and female chickens, (ducks, geese,

turkeys)? chickens-m.long sharp hackle feathers, saddle feathers and sickles on tail, f.short, blunt hackle feathers, no saddle feathers or sickles on the tail

*Why does a judge ask to see the feet and legs of birds?

check for deformity, disease and parasites

What is the function of the preen gland and where is it located?

it is located near the base of the tail, it's function is to produce an oily substance that the bird uses to wipe on it's feathers for preening, helps to waterproof waterfowls feathers

*What is the purpose of the breed of poultry you are using for showmanship?

meat production, egg production, dual purpose, ornamental/exhibition

How many primary and secondary flight feathers do most chickens have?

10 primary and 14-18 secondary

What are three functions of the comb and wattles?

help regulate body temperature, sex differentiation, breed identification

*What are basic signs of good health in your poultry, what are signs of illness?

*Alert, active, clear eyes, good manure consistency and free from external parasites
Watery eyes, snuffy nostrils or breathing problem, emaciated, puffed out feathers,
hunched over, diarrhea*

*What is the difference between a broiler, a roaster and a capon?

*broiler-young meat birds processed at(6-8) wks of age, roasters-(10-14) wks of age,
capon-castrated meat bird (18-20) wks of age*

Where is the crop on a chicken and what is it's purpose?

an enlargement of the esophagus just above the junction of the body cavity. It holds food that the bird eats and slowly releases it into the digestive track.

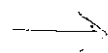
*How can you tell if baby chicks under a brooder or heat lamp have the proper temperature?

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How many eyelids does a chicken have? 3 - one from the top, one from the bottom and one

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How is *Salmonella pullorum* spread or transmitted?

through the egg either from the organisms in the ovary or by contact of infected manure in the next box

*What disease of poultry should small flock owners be particularly aware of that can cause high mortality, especially to commercial poultry growers?

Avian Influenza

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Name three nutrients that chickens and other poultry require each day.

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*Which nutrient other than oxygen should poultry have access to at all times?

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*What three things need to be supplied when using an incubator to hatch eggs?

heat, humidity, turning of the eggs

*How long are the incubation periods for chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese?

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If when checking the legs of your chicken you find that the scales on the shank are crusty, bumpy and swollen, what might the problem be? How can it be treated?

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ammonia

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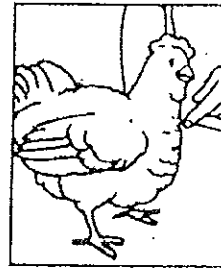
the protein levels...starter 18-19% CP, grower 14-15% CP, layer 16-17% CP

*Know the parts of your bird, the sex, what class you are showing it in and any disqualifications it might have.

** indicates questions are suitable for novice levels and up*

Home
Up

Poultry Showmanship Steps



1. Carrying the Bird

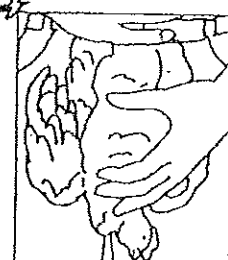
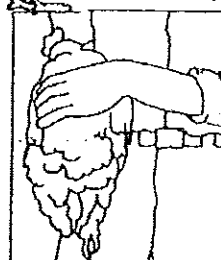
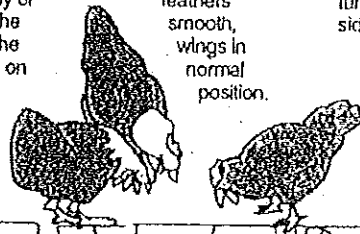
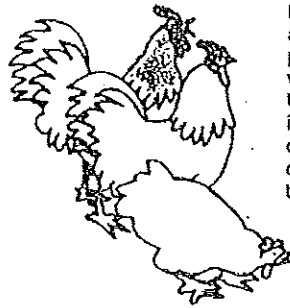
Bird kept balanced and upright on the palm of the hand with head between the arm and body or if small against the carrier's body. The other hand rests on the bird's back.

2. Posing the Bird

Bird shown on table in alert position with tail fluffed, head and beak raised, feathers smooth, wings in normal position.

3. Examining Head

Bird raised to shoulder height with free hand used to move head. Bird turned and other side examined.



4. Examining Wings

First wing spread by grouping wing tip with free hand and pulling. Second wing examined by placing free hand across body of bird and applying pressure to last wing joint with thumb and fingers to extend wing.

5. Examining Undercolor

Finger tips used to gently pull tops of feathers "against the grain."

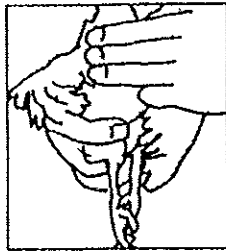
6. Showing Width of Body

Thumb and index finger of free hand placed across the bird's body directly behind the base of the wings to determine width and shape of the body.

7. Checking the Breast

Bird's head held downward with its back against showperson. Free hand used to measure breast bone and examine keel for straightness, breast blisters, indentations or other defects.

Poultry Showmanship Steps (Continued)



8. Measuring Depth of Abdomen

Vent examined and depth of abdomen measured by placing as many fingers of the free hand as possible between the tip of the keel and the pubic bones.



9. Measuring Width of Pubic Bones

As many fingers of free hand as is easily possible placed between the tips of the pubic bones.



10. Examining Feet and Legs

Bird held against showperson's body and freehand used to examine all parts. Bird swiveled to examine front of feet and legs.

